

**United States Environmental Protection Agency
Criminal Investigation Division
Investigative Activity Report**

Case Number:

1000-0494

Case Title:

Cooke Aquaculture Fish Farm Release

Subject of Report:

2018-01-08 Interview of [REDACTED]

Reporting Office:

Seattle, WA, Area Office

Activity Date:

January 8, 2018

Reporting Official and Date:

[REDACTED]

Agent

12-JAN-2018, Signed by: [REDACTED]

Approving Official and Date:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

16-JAN-2018, Approved by: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

SYNOPSIS

On January 8, 2018, SA [REDACTED] conducted a phone interview with [REDACTED] in Anacortes, Washington.

DETAILS

On January 8, 2018, I conducted a phone interview with [REDACTED] in Anacortes, Washington. After being notified of the identity of the interviewing agent and the nature of the interview, [REDACTED] in substance, provided the following information:

[REDACTED] He is familiar with the Cooke Aquaculture company as [REDACTED] office is in the same building as Cooke Aquaculture. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] which added the cross bracing on Cooke Aquaculture's net pen #2. The manager of net pen #2 at that time, [REDACTED], believed that the cross bracing would stabilize the walkways. [REDACTED] believed that the tides and currents were causing the decking to flex and cracks in the structure were starting to appear. [REDACTED] thought net pen #2 was in a position in which it received very strong currents and wanted to receive a permit to move the net pen to a better position.

When the cross bracing was placed into the structure, [REDACTED] did not have any engineering plans. [REDACTED] placed the cross braces as proposed by [REDACTED] as he was trying to stabilize the net pen structure. [REDACTED] believes this idea had to be approved by [REDACTED].

The net pen #2 system was a "big bag" crowded with fish. The currents are much stronger at sixty feet below the net pen versus that on the surface. This net pen was a "big sail" under water. The net pen had twenty-one, six thousand pound anchors attached to the net pen. Strong currents, not excessive tides are what [REDACTED] believes is causing the damage to the net pen. [REDACTED] believes that the hinge part of the net pen #2 structure was the failure point in August of 2017.

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█ could observe some of the wreckage of net pen #2 when it was removed from the water and the hinges seemed to have torn apart. █ does not believe that the anchors of net pen #2 failed. █ believes it was a “perfect storm” of strong current, the eclipse and the size of the pen which caused it to fail.

█ believes that Cooke Aquaculture knew that net pen #2’s “time was up” on the site, but you cannot harvest the fish contained in the net pens in a rapid manner.

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